

## Chapter 273

GRAND KING DAEMONIKAI

He woke feeling surprisingly well-rested.

His eyes adjusted to the brightness of the room, sunlight streaming through the open window. How long had they slept?

He stirred slightly, finding himself face-to-face with Emeriel's soft, creamy breast.

Her dark and flushed enticing nipple pointed directly at him, and his mouth watered at the sight. His dick twisted inside her, drawing his attention to the fact their bodies were joined intimately.

The memories of his nightmares... and the fevered lovemaking that followed, flooded his mind.

Gritting his teeth, Daemonikai summoned every ounce of restraint he possessed to keep from taking her again.

He withdrew from her tight, warm heat, even as it clung to him, trying to pull him back in and the sensation nearly undid him. But he persisted, finally freeing himself.

He pulled her torn garment up, covering her succulent breast to shield them from his wandering eyes.

Then he simply watched her sleep.

For long, quiet minutes, Daemonikai drank in the gentle curve of her lips, the tiny freckle adorning her nose, the steady rise and fall of her chest.

"You know, I thought I'd always have to deal with everything on my own," he murmured to the stillness of the room. "And for someone who hasn't truly been alone in centuries, it was a terrifying concept. But then you came along. Maybe Ukrae doesn't hate me as much as I sometimes think he does."

He sighed, a sudden wish stirring in his heart. If only he had artistic skills... Daemonikai would draw her just like this.

Her serene expression. Her hair spread around her like a halo. Beauty like magic.

"Never in my life did I expect a surprise like you." He leaned down, placing a tender kiss on her nose. "Thank you for last night... and this morning."

Quietly, he rose and crossed the room to fill a basin with water, retrieving a washcloth.

Returning to the bed, he knelt beside her, and gently parted her thighs, exposing her pretty, sweet privates to his eyes once again.

Daemonikai began cleaning her, wiping his fluid from her inner thighs. When the cloth brushed directly over her tender core, she winced but didn't wake.

Guilt surged in him. She was likely aching all over, because he was being insatiable and selfish.

He continued cleaning her, even gentler now, taking far longer than necessary to ensure she was cared for without disturbing her rest.

When he finished, he pulled the blanket over her, tucking her in with care, and left her to sleep undisturbed.

After his own bath, Daemonikai went hunting. Time to treat her like the true princess she is.

The familiar paths welcomed him with crisp air and rustling leaves as he sprinted through the trees. He stayed focused, needing to return to the cottage before she woke.

It didn't take long for him to spot his prey. The creature sensed his presence and bolted.

Daemonikai gave chase with a burst of speed, closing the distance effortlessly. In one fluid motion, he caught the animal and twisted its neck, ending its life instantly.

Hefting the lifeless prey onto his shoulders, satisfied with the clean kill, he made his way back to the cottage.

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PRINCESS EMERIEL

She woke with a start, her heart sinking when her hand found the empty space beside her. The sheets were cold.

Glancing toward the grand clock mounted on the wall, she grimaced. She had slept the day away—it was already early evening.

Her stomach growled loudly in the quiet room. Heavens, I'm starving.

After a quick bath, she dressed in fresh clothes and made her way to the living room.

There, sprawled casually across the cushions, was King Daemonikai.

He held up a folded news sheet, his eyes scanning the print.

The moment she stepped in, he lowered it, locking his sharp gaze onto her with ease.

"The sleeping goddess awakes," he drawled.

The low timbre in his voice sent heat rushing to her cheeks, steps faltering.

She tried—and failed—not to stare at the defined muscles of his arms. The thin undertunic he wore did little to conceal his powerful biceps.

"Your Grace." Emeriel dropped into a curtsy, unable to meet his eyes.

Now that they had finally reconciled, Emeriel felt strangely uncertain. What was expected of me now?

She had never let any man court her properly before, let alone one who stirred strong emotions in her like he did.

"Come here, young princess."

She stepped closer, stopping a pace away, her hands clasped nervously in front of her.

"That's not how you greet your male." His lips curved into a smirk. "Greet me properly."

Her heart stuttered. He wants... what? A hug?

She glanced at his seated posture. That may be awkward.

Clearing her throat, she spread her arms timidly, leaning forward for what she hoped would pass as an acceptable embrace.

Before she could go further, his strong arm grabbed her waist, tugging her forward.

She gasped as she lost her balance, tumbling into him. His arms encircled her possessively, and he tilted her head to the side, claiming her lips with his.

The kiss was light, soft, and impossibly warm.

Her initial surprise melted into a sigh as she relaxed against him, her hands finding their place on his chest. His heartbeat steady and strong beneath her fingertips.

Emeriel kissed him back, her uncertainty fading in the heat of his touch.

So this is what I would have given up? The thought drifted through her mind. I wouldn't mind waking up like this every day.

When he finally pulled back, her head swam, her breath coming in shallow gasps. She blinked a few times, trying to clear the lightheadedness clouding her senses.

"That." He smirked. "My fair Riel, is how you greet your Soulbond?"

Heavens, I wish it would always be like this. Emeriel prayed. Please, fill our days with more bliss like this.

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GRAND LORD ZAIPER

Returning to his chambers in the early hours of the morning, Zaiper reeked of sex, whistling cheerfully. His steps carried an unmistakable swagger.

His head soldier observed him curiously but respectfully kept his mouth shut.

Zaiper noticed and grinned as he entered his chamber. "Go on, you may ask."

Razarr inclined his head slightly. "You seem unusually cheerful this morning, Your Highness. Is there an occasion?"

"Oh, indeed there is." Zaiper threw a glance over his shoulder and winked. "I'm preparing something truly special for two very important people in this kingdom. Just wait and see."

Razarr's curiosity deepened, though his tone remained measured. "Does this mean your special plan is foolproof?"

"Absolutely." Zaiper's eyes gleamed with pure excitement. "Just thinking about it makes my blood race. After so many failures, you are about to witness a victory unlike anything you've ever seen. Wait for it, Razarr." He began undressing, whistling a jaunty tune. "It's going to be massive."